



2020 Gallery of History:

The Church of the Pilgrimage
in
Plymouth, Massachusetts

By Rev. Dr. Douglas K. Showalter

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Benson and Orwell, Vermont [1973-1976]
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Doug created the **2020 Gallery of History: The Church of the Pilgrimage in Plymouth, Massachusetts** in 2020 as a contribution to that year's 400th Anniversary of the 1620 arrival of the Pilgrims in Plymouth and their bringing to these shores then the basic Congregational approach to the Christian faith which The Church of the Pilgrimage has long practiced and cherished. This document is licensed under this Creative Commons license:

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The image of The Church of the Pilgrimage on the cover of this document was taken by Doug Showalter in 2020.



1. *Mayflower II in the Harbor of Plymouth, Massachusetts*

This ship was launched in 1956 as a replica of the Mayflower which first brought the Pilgrims to Plymouth in 1620.



2. The Pilgrims' Meeting-House/Fort at Plimoth Plantation

*This is a replica of the Pilgrims' 1622 building
which was located on what today is known as
Plymouth's Burial Hill.*

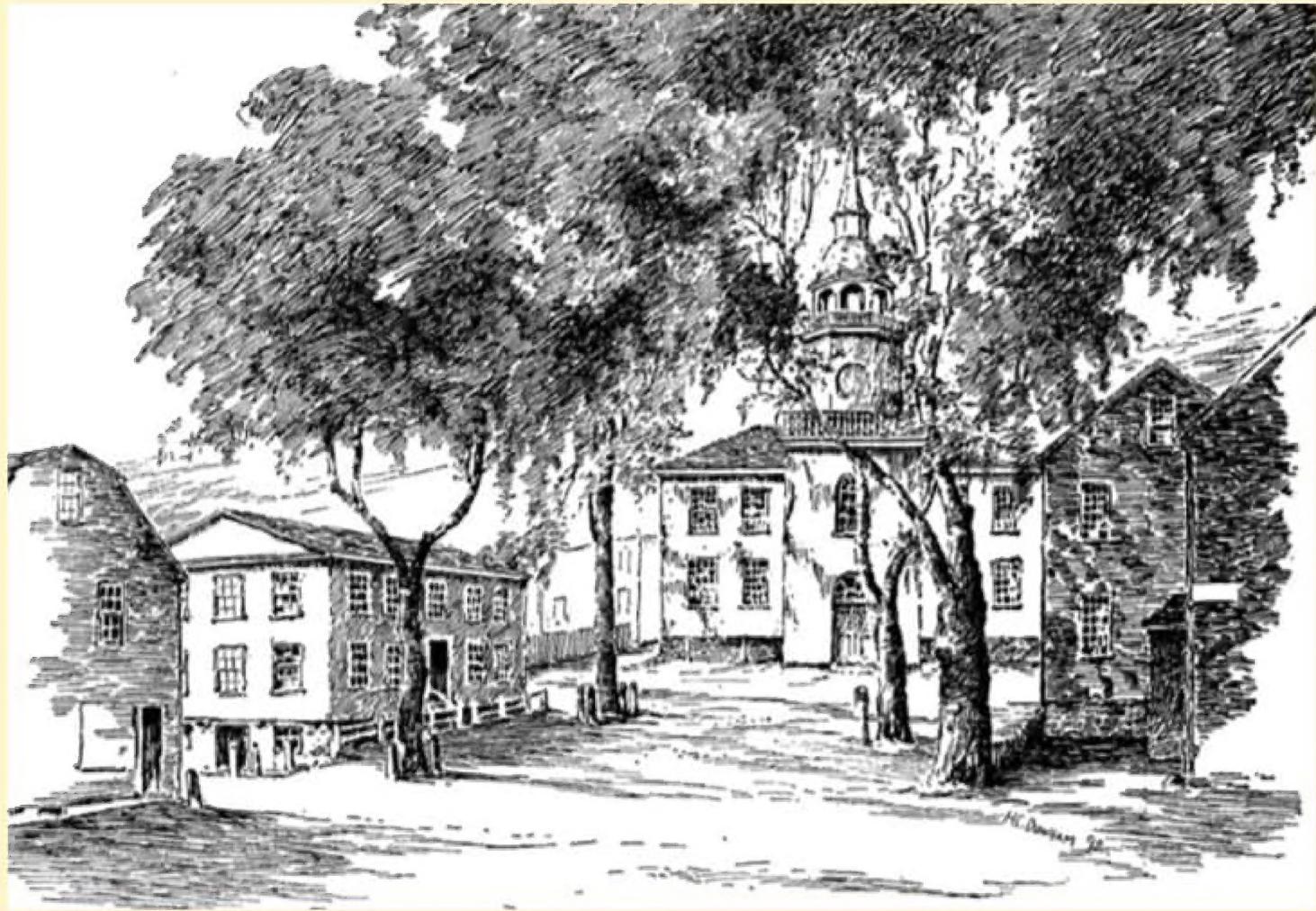


3. Cannons on the Upper Level of the Pilgrims' Meeting-House/Fort



4. The Pulpit on the Lower Level of the Meeting-House/Fort

Reformed Protestant worship of that period typically had a central pulpit and a low railing enclosing it, on which was a lectern used for Bible readings and leading Psalm singing. Baptisms and weddings were also conducted within that railing.



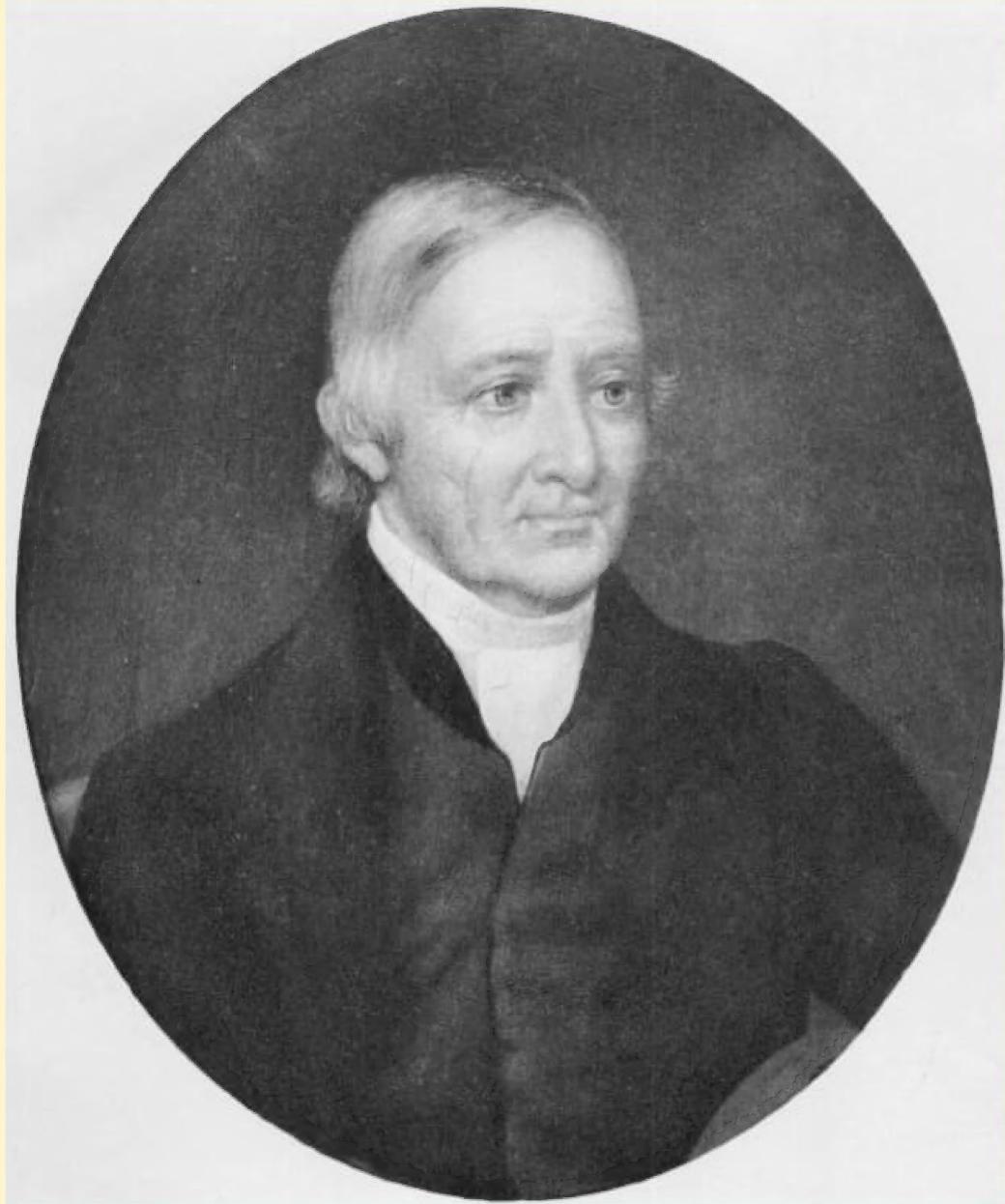
5. 1744-1831 Meeting-House of the First Church of Christ in Plymouth

Later this church became known as First Parish Church. It was situated on the flanks of Plymouth's Burial Hill.



6. Rev. Chandler Robbins

Rev. Robbins served First Church from 1760 until his death in 1799. Like many Congregationalists of his day he was a strong Calvinist and he refused to baptize children if neither of their parents were church members.



7. Rev. James Kendall

Rev. Kendall served First Church from 1800 until 1859. Opposition to his settlement at First Church came from First Church Deacon John Bishop and others who felt Kendall was too liberal and not a strong Calvinist like the church's former minister, Rev. Robbins. First Church members voted 23/15 to settle Kendall at First Church. Citizens of Plymouth's First Precinct, who were then required to pay taxes to support First Church's ministry, voted 253/15 in favor of his settlement.



8. Third Church's First House of Worship Built in 1801

Rev. Kendall had only been settled at First Church about 5 months when Deacon John Bishop and others, at a cost of \$233.58, bought land on Pleasant Street, just west of Plymouth's Training Green, to build a new church on. That 60 X 52 foot church was built in 1801 and had a cupola. After 1840 that building served as a town high school. It was torn down in 1890 or later.

The 52 former members (34 Women/18 Men) of the
First Church of Christ in Plymouth who gathered the
Third Church of Christ in Plymouth on
October 1, 1801

Mary Bacon	John Cobb	Phebe Holmes
Jesse Bartlett	Polly Darling	Joanna Kempton
John Bartlett	David Diman	Bathsheba Lothrop
Martha Bartlett	Patience Diman	Ephraim Morton
Sarah Bartlett	Elizabeth Dimon	Joseph W. Nelson
Sylvanus Bartlett	Elijah Donham	Rebecca Reed
John Bishop	Eunice Donham	Samuel Rider
Elizabeth Bradford	Elizabeth Doten	Elizabeth Savory
Louis Bradford	Elizabeth Faunce	Rebecca Sears
Remember Bramhall	Mary Faunce	Lydia Smith
Amaziah Churchill	Hannah Hall	Sarah Smith
Wid. Elizabeth Churchill	Jesse Harlow Jur	Mary Spooner
Elizabeth Churchill Sen.	Lot Harlow	Jane Swift
Elizabeth Churchill Ju.	Nathaniel Harlow	Susanna Swift
Mary Churchill	Zeth Harlow Jur	Benjamin Warren
Sarah Churchill	Abigail Holmes Ju.	Nathan Whiting
Solomon Churchill	Cloe Holmes	
Hannah Cobb	Deborah Holmes	

**9. The 52 People Who Gathered the
Third Church of Christ in Plymouth in 1801**
Almost half the members of First Church were,
at their request, dismissed from First Church on
September 24, 1801 in order to leave Rev.
Kendall's ministry and gather a new church.
Led by John Bishop, that dismissed group met
a week later on October 1 and gathered the
Third Church. In 1870 that church was
renamed "The Church of the Pilgrimage."

The Third Church's Covenant
Affirmed By Its Members at its Gathering
October 1, 1801

In the presence of God + Each other you do now Severally + Jointly take the Lord Jehovah To be your god Jesus Christ to be your Savior and the Holy Ghost to be your Sanktifyer.

Solemnly promising to renounce all sin, you Covenant with God + one another to walk in all The Commands + Ordinances of the Gospel, you do now Voluntarily give your selves up to God + Engage to Unite in Church state in the faith + fellowship of the Gospel as an Instituted church of Christ.

You promise to keep + observe The holy Ordinances V3. Baptism + the Lord's Supper as occasion may offer. + by divine assistance you Engage to watch over each other in meekness + love + faithfully observe + submit to all the rules of Church Discipline as a Church of Christ.

You also promise to walk regularly with this Church + all the churches of Christ with whom you are in fellowship among us that his name may be One + his praise one in all the Churches.

You are now considered + declared to be **The Third Congregational Church of Christ in Plymouth.**

**10. The Church Covenant Entered Into On
October 1, 1801**

Following Congregational practice, the Third Church was "gathered" when its first members entered into this solemn Covenant with God and each other. In 1802, the Massachusetts Legislature incorporated the Third Congregational Society in Plymouth making it eligible to receive town taxpayer dollars to support the ministry at Third Church.

When the Third Church of Christ was Gathered on

October 1, 1801, its founding members adopted by vote a number of articles describing how they believed the Christian Faith should be practiced in their new church, including the following article which provided a job description for any Minister serving their church.

Article 16:

That we look upon it as a principal part of Ministerial Work besides Praying & preaching publicly & administering the Ordinances, To know the state of the flock & for this and Frequently to visit the poor, as Well as the rich & Converse with them about the state of their souls, that he may more privately as well as publicly pull down the kingdom of satan & build up the redeemer's kingdom in the hearts of his hearers.

11. The Job Description for Third Church's Ministers as Adopted at the 1801 Gathering



12. Rev. Adoniram Judson Sr.

Rev. Judson, a Congregationalist, served as Moderator at the 1801 Gathering which created the Third Church of Christ in Plymouth. He also served as Third Church's first Pastor from 1802-1817. He then became a Baptist, as did his famous son, Adoniram Jr., in 1812.



13. Deacon John Bishop's House

The house John Bishop owned is on Plymouth's Summer Street. It is known as the Harlow-Bishop house today. Bishop was a Deacon of both First Church and the new Third Church. Some early Third Church meetings were held in his house. He also served as a Selectman of Plymouth.

Eight Churches Came into Being From the First Church of Christ in Plymouth

Six emerged to be situated in growing communities

- ~ 1632 Duxbury
- ~ 1632 Marshfield
- ~ 1646 Eastham
- ~ 1698 Plympton
- ~ 1717 Kingston
- ~ 1738 Second Church, Plymouth (Manomet)

Two emerged due theological differences

- ~ 1744 Third Church, Plymouth emerged during the Great Awakening, but reunited with First Church in 1784
- ~ 1801 Third Church, Plymouth was formed by nearly half First Church's Covenant members who left First Church due to theological differences with Rev. James Kendall, that church's new minister. In 1870 this Third Church was renamed The Church of the Pilgrimage.

14. Eight Churches Which Emerged from First Church

These churches were formed due to the growth of communities seeking the convenience of having their own church nearby or to internal theological differences which divided First Church.



15. Rev. Adoniram Judson Jr. Joined Third Church in 1809

In 1812 Adoniram Jr. became one of America's very first foreign missionaries. While traveling to his mission post overseas his views on Baptism changed with the result that he felt compelled to leave Congregationalism. He ultimately became a famous Baptist missionary who long served in Burma.



16. The Burial Hill Gravestone of Deacon John Bishop and His Wife Abigail
John and Abigail died two days apart in 1830 and were buried in the same grave on the East side of Burial Hill. John is thought to have been born about 1744 in Bristol, England.

1833 - The End of State Supported Religion in Massachusetts

- ~ In 1780, MA towns were legally required to tax residents to provide financial support for a church in their community--and many towns supported Congregational churches.
- ~ In 1811, MA residents opposed to their town's financial support of a particular church(es), were legally able to have their own tax dollars raised for religion given instead to their own preferred religious group.
- ~ In 1833, the state support of religion in MA was legally ended. Thus, Third Church became entirely dependant on themselves and on the legal entity known as the society or parish affiliated with them, for their financial support. No more town tax dollars.

In that period and in earlier years, churches could not be incorporated legally in MA. Thus, it usually was the society or parish legally affiliated with a church which:

- ~ owned the building that church worshipped in,
- ~ sold and/or rented the pews in that building,
- ~ negotiated and paid the salary of the minister of that church.

In contrast, Churches usually oversaw their own mission budgets.

A society or parish usually set the budget for supporting their church each year, then charged each member of their society/parish an amount to fund that budget. Many society/parish members were not also Covenant members of the church their society/parish supported.

In 1802, the **Third Congregational Society** was legally incorporated with 154 members to help support Plymouth's new Third Church.

17. The End of Massachusetts Town Taxes Supporting Religion

Massachusetts was the last New England state to end its financial support of churches.



18. Washington Allston, Artist-Poet

Allston designed the 1840 house of worship in Plymouth's Town Square for the Third Church. The Allston section of Boston was named after him.



19. The 1840 Church of the Pilgrimage Designed By Washington Allston

Allston designed that church building in Modern Tuscan Style with a tower 78 feet high. At that time, a new society, the Society of the Pilgrimage, was formed to support Third Church. The chapel shown here on the left of the church was dedicated in 1852.

The Construction and Financing of Third Church's 1840 Church of the Pilgrimage

The document below was signed by seven men who vowed to pay the builders of this 1840 house of worship, whatever deficiency there would be in funding available for this new church, including for the purchase of:

- **land** on which the church is to be built
- **construction and materials** used in erecting the church, and
- **furnishings** for this new church.

The seven also authorized the builders to sell this new church's **pews**, so those funds could be applied to the expenses above.

Those seven men were: ?, F. Bartlett, Josiah Robbins, Salisbury Jackson, James E. Learned, Stephen Lucas, and Sylvanus Harlow. Their generosity must have been deeply appreciated.

The names of the intended builders were: Ezra Finney, William Nelson, and Timothy Gordon.



20. The Construction and Financing of the 1840 Church of the Pilgrimage

**The Church of the Pilgrimage, Plymouth, MA
Box Pews w/Doors to be Sold
at Public Auction -- November 24, 1840**

Doug Showalter

21. The 1840 Pew Plan of Third Church's New 1840 Church Building

This church was originally built with 3 aisles, 92 pews with doors, and an organ loft with 80 sittings--an estimated total of nearly 700 seats. It also likely had one or two stoves in the back whose piping ran the length of the church and up the front wall of the sanctuary to the attic and then chimneys extending above the roof.



Greek Corinthian Capital in the style known as the [Tower of the Winds Order](#), identified with the building in Athens, Greece, built about 100-50 BC, which was used for measuring time. The style has a single row of acanthus leaves which surround a single row of palm leaves. In the ancient Mediterranean world acanthus leaves were sometimes identified with enduring life.

Capitals in the style of the [Tower of the Winds Order](#) as they appear in the sanctuary of The Church of the Pilgrimage.

22. *Third Church's 1840 Sanctuary Described*

As the local "Old Colony Memorial" newspaper noted at the time of the church's dedication: "The interior is purely Grecian, and presents a colonade of pilasters extending around the house, adorned with capitals copied from the Tower of the Winds at Athens . . . This Church received its name in commemoration of the great event of the Pilgrimage of our Puritan fathers to this sacred spot, and also in allusion to the fact that its location is but a few feet distant from the place where they first erected their Tabernacle for Jehovah."

ORDER OF SERVICES

AT THE

DEDICATION

OF THE

Church of the Pilgrimage,

PLYMOUTH, NOVEMBER 24, 1840.

I. VOLUNTEER.

II. INTRODUCTORY PRAYER.

III. READING OF THE SCRIPTURES.

IV. HYMNS.

Holy be this, as was the place,
To him of Padan-aram known,
Where Abram's God revealed his face,
And caught the pilgrim to the throne.

Oh, how transporting was the glow
That thrilled his bosom mixed with fear,
"Lo, the Eternal walks below,
The Highest tabernacles here!"

Be ours, when faith and hope grow dim,
The glories which the patriarch saw;
And when we faint, may we, like him,
Fresh vigor from the vision draw.

Heaven's lightning hovered o'er his head,
And flashed new splendors on his view:
Break forth, O Son! and freely shed
Glad rays upon our Bethel too.

We tread the path thy people trod,
Alternate sunshine, bitter tears;
Go Thou before, and with thy rod
Divide the Jordan of our fears.

Be ours the song of triumph give'n,
Angelic themes to lips of clay;
And ours the holy harp of Heaven,
Whose strains dissolve the soul away.

V.
SERMON,
BY REV. ROBERT C. HALL.

VI.
ANTHEM.

VII. PRAYER OF CONSECRATION.

VIII. ORIGINAL HYMN,

Written for the occasion by William B. Tappan

O God! what clouds of glory rolled
Around, within, thy house of old!
To dedicate that house, what throng
Its pavement trod!—what prayer! what song!

Moriah's awful mount was there!
And thoughts of Abraham's faith and prayer
Came up, where Israel's thousands knelt,—
Where God between the cherubs dwelt.

Yet not less glory's cloud around
This house is seen, and o'er this ground;
Not less sweet thoughts of faith appear,
Not less the Hebrews' God is here!

Yon Bay, whose stormy waters bore
The Child of Promise to this shore—
Yon Mount, where sacrifice was made,
And where the patriarchs' bones are laid

Are holy!—Thou that led'st thy flock,
Our Pilgrim Fathers, to this Rock,
As Thou wast then, their staff and rod,
Be Thou, to day, the children's God.

On ground wet with their frequent tear,
Ye Gates, that now with joy we rear,
Be lifted!—"Yet to whom lift we?"
O TRINITY! TO THEE! TO THEE!

IX. CONCLUDING PRAYER.

X.
ANTHEM.

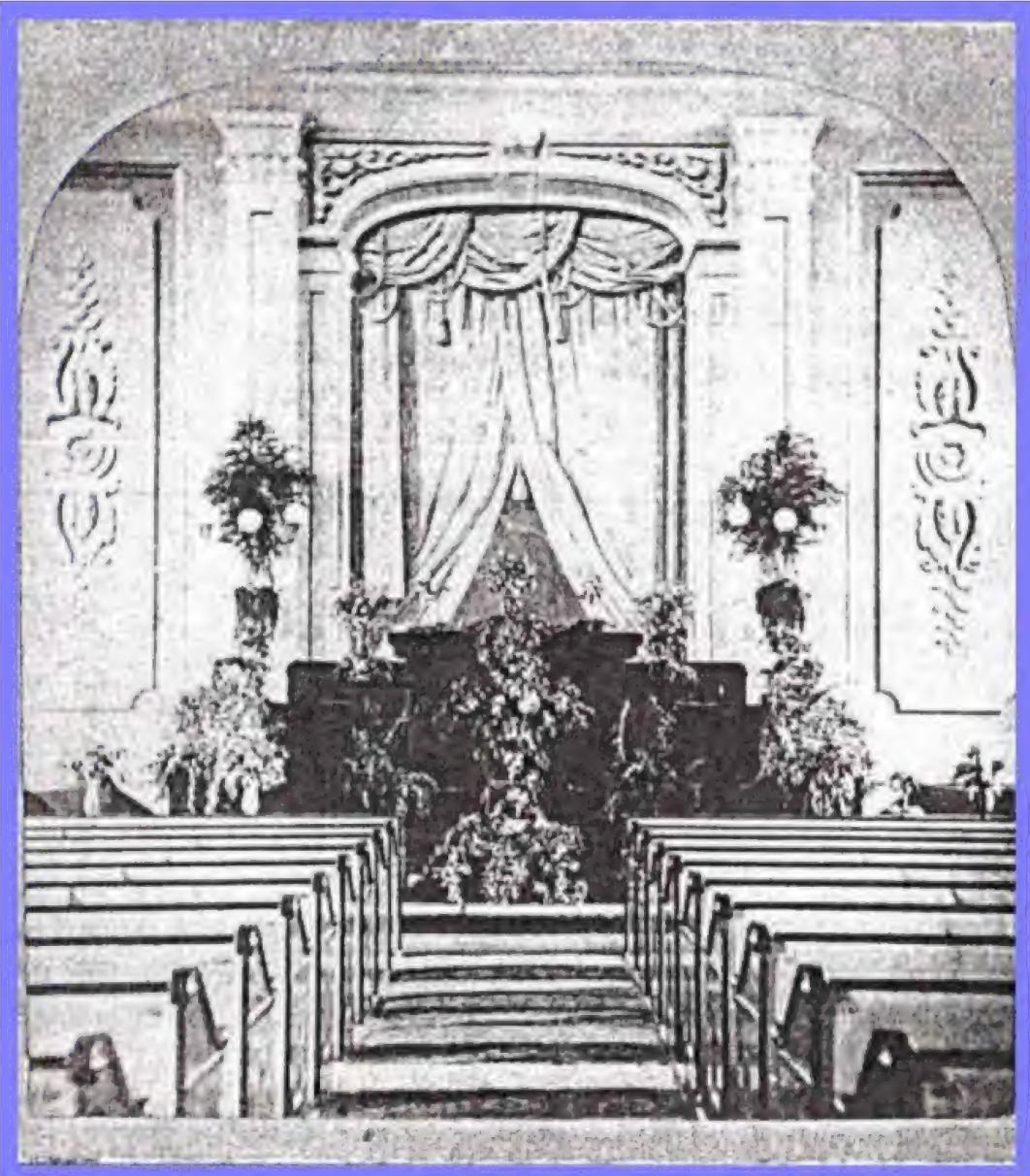
XI.
BENEDICTION.



24. 1841 Tower Bell

Forged By Henry N. Hooper and Co.

This bell and its tongue weighed 1210 lbs and cost \$331.40. Hooper was an apprentice in Paul Revere's Boston foundry. Later, Hooper bought that foundry. Hooper's foundry forged its first bell in 1838 and also became known for making chimes, decorative lighting, and artillery for the Union Army during the Civil War.



Sanctuary of The Church of the Pilgrimage.

View shows interior after 1855 (when gas lights were installed) and before 1883 when the church was rededicated (after having been raised, remodeled and redecorated in 1887).

Original pulpit shown in picture (when church was built in 1840).

25. Third Church's Sanctuary 1856-1887
When it was first built that sanctuary was originally lit with candles and/or whale oil lamps.



26. Congregationalism's Famous Burial Hill Declaration of 1865

American Congregationalists came to Plymouth on June 22, 1865, shortly after President Lincoln's death, to honor their Pilgrim heritage and declare their faith and vision for their future. They made that Declaration from Burial Hill, then visited the Pilgrim-descended First Church and Third Church on the flanks of that hill. That same day they all gathered around Plymouth Rock and John Adams Whipple took their picture, which is shown above.



27. Third Church's Invitation to Congregationalists Around Our Nation

Our church invited representatives from American Congregational churches to gather to make plans for observing the 250th Anniversary of the Landing of the Pilgrims in 1870. That meeting was soon followed by other Congregational meetings and the creation in 1871 of the National Council of Congregational Churches of the United States. Thus, American Congregationalism had its first continuing, national, denominational organization.

On May 5, 1870, members of the
Third Church of Christ in Plymouth
voted to change its name.

The church took on the name of its
1840 house of worship.

Thus, ever since that day this church
has been known as:

The Church of the Pilgrimage

28. *Third Church Becomes "The Church of the Pilgrimage"*

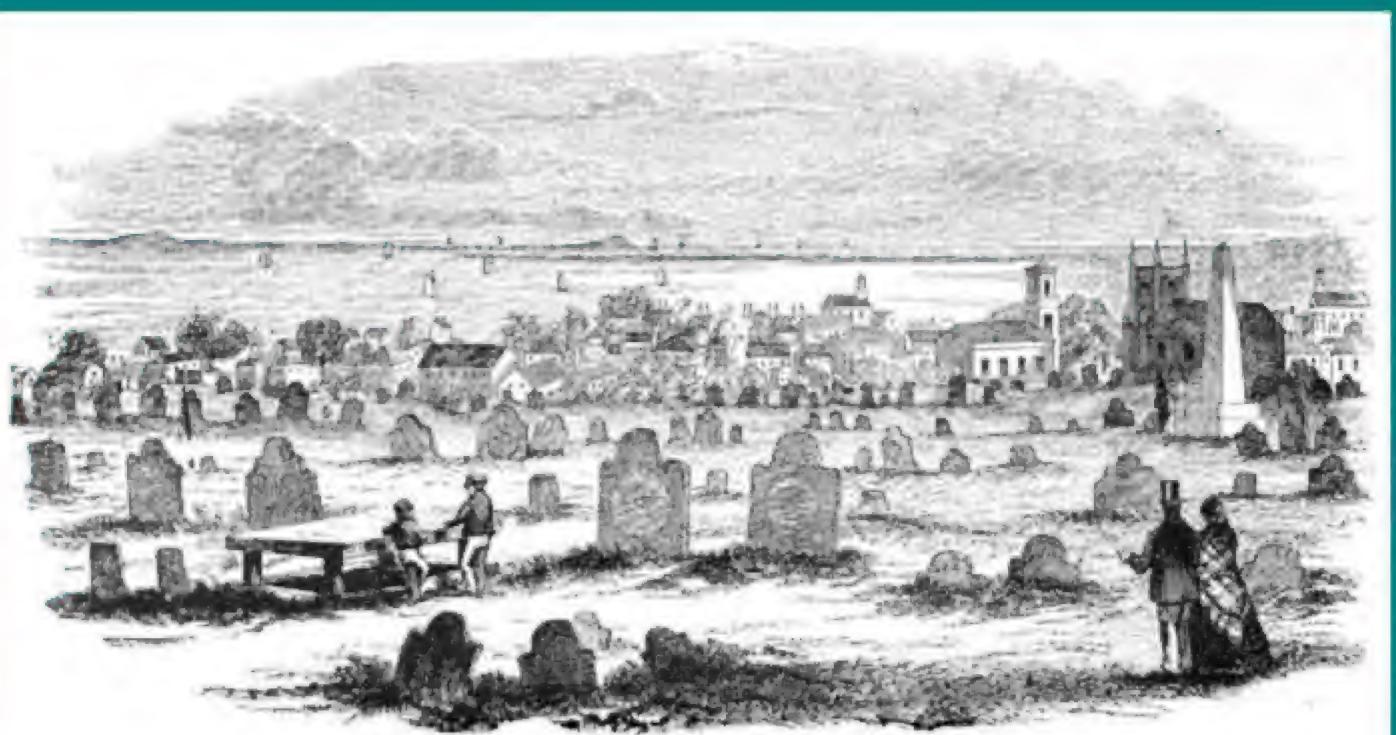
Church records indicate that at a January 30, 1870 meeting of the church, "Brother T. Gordon" recommended this name change. At a church meeting the following May 5th, "It was moved that the proposed change be made and adopted, passed by a unanimous vote without discussion."

Women Are Given the Right To Vote in Meetings of The Church of the Pilgrimage

- ~ **October 1, 1801** The Third Church was gathered with **34 women** and **18 men** as its first members. Apparently, only the men were allowed to vote on its founding. However, that was typical in American churches at that time.
- ~ **February 18, 1858** It was voted to construe the word "**brethren**" in Third Church's Covenant as meaning "**members**." Presumably that was done to at least implicitly indicate that female members of the church were also included in the Covenant.
- ~ **January 8, 1862** Men of Third Church voted officially to call a new minister to the church. But then, the "**Forty or more sisters**" present were asked, by a hand vote, to express their view of that decision. They were "**hearty and unanimous**" in approving the men's official decision.
- ~ **February 13, 1871** By vote, the Rules of Government section of the Bylaws of The Church of the Pilgrimage (Third Church) were changed in this way. The word "**male**" was **erased** in a line and that line was reworded this way: "**but all business determined by vote shall be transacted by those of its members who shall have attained the legal age.**"

Finally, in 1871 female members of the church were allowed to cast official votes, right along with the church's male members. However, it would be another **49 years** before women were legally able to vote in US elections.

29. 1871 Female Members Are Finally Granted the Right To Vote in Our Church



VIEW OF BURIAL HILL, PLYMOUTH, MASS., U.S.A.

30. A View From the Top of Burial Hill

From Burial Hill one can see First Church (First Parish), The Church of the Pilgrimage, the town of Plymouth, and Plymouth's harbor.



31. The 1840 Church Rededicated in 1888

Our church was rededicated after it had been moved 20 feet westward and raised 9 feet to create a level below the sanctuary with a parlor and a room named Allerton Chapel. Also, stained glass windows had been installed in the sanctuary and a heating unit(s) put on that lower level to send heat up to the sanctuary through floor registers.

The Church of the Pilgrimage Becomes Incorporated

In 1887 Massachusetts laws finally allowed churches to be incorporated, so they could own their own property and handle their own legal and financial matters, without depending on an affiliated society or parish for that assistance.

Our church became incorporated on **January 20, 1890** and its society at that point, the **Society of the Pilgrimage** (formed in 1840 when its current church was built), conveyed its ownership of the property used by the church, to the church.

That same year, 1890, our church began providing its **pews free of charge** to all worshippers. In that same period, our church began to depend on the **free will offerings and pledges** of its parishioners to fund its yearly operating budget, instead of on its affiliated society and such things as their pew sales or rentals.

It is likely that at that time an **Offering** was added to our church's worship services, in order to stress the spiritual importance of and great need for those freely given contributions from our parishioners--as well to collect those contributions. Such a time in worship was not usually needed, when a society or parish, in addition to its other fund raising efforts, was essentially billing its own members each year to support the church its society/parish was affiliated with.

32. The Incorporation of The Church of the Pilgrimage

Our church was incorporated in 1890, one of the earlier ones in Massachusetts to be incorporated. The Society of the Pilgrimage apparently was disbanded after that incorporation. And apparently, near that time a new category called the "Congregation" was established in our church's Bylaws. That category was defined as consisting of "such persons of lawful age as habitually worship with the Church and contribute in its recognized methods for the support of its services." That new category likely was created to include former members of that disbanded Society who were not also members of the church. That category appears to have remained in our church's Bylaws until at least 1939, but not in 1947.

The Church of the Pilgrimage's Tower

was badly damaged at least twice in the 1800's.

On **January 11, 1885** a strong gale carried part of that tower over 300 feet away and a part broke through the church's roof.

On **November 27, 1898** a heavy northeast storm blew parts of that tower away. As an article in Plymouth's "Old Colony Memorial" newspaper noted after that storm:

**The Great Storm - The Worst Ever Known in Plymouth.
Wreck Strewn Shore - Great Loss of Life on the Shore.**

"... The roof of the belfry of the Church of the Pilgrimage went off about 4 a. m. and collided with the house, 17 High street, occupied by John T. Holmes, knocking down an outer porch and stairs, and startling the family considerably. Other pieces of the belfry were blown off during the day. All over town trees were blown down and orchards suffered... It is estimated that over 100 vessels have been wrecked and more than 300 lives lost along the Massachusetts coast."

As that newspaper also reported following that storm, the corner posts of the church's tower "protruded toward heaven like the stumps on the head of a broken horned cow."

33. The Church's Tower Severely Damaged By Storms

A February 1917 record of our church indicates repairs were also needed then, due to a winter storm which "blew down a portion of the tower."

A 1953 church worship bulletin indicates the church's steeple was completely rebuilt then.



34. The Church of the Pilgrimage Redesigned in 1899

Joseph Everett Chandler, noted Colonial Revival architect, enlarged the church's front, adding three palladian windows and also a new top section of the tower badly damaged in 1898. The church likely was painted light grey and white in this period.



35. Inspiration for the Redesign of The Church of the Pilgrimage's Tower

Architect Chandler indicated that his inspiration for the design of our church's tower after the 1898 blizzard came to him during a trip to Italy, when he saw a church in Italy's northern section, near Milan. Chandler couldn't remember that church's name or town. It seems likely that his inspiration came from the tower of the church pictured above, which is the Church of St. Mary of Mount Berico in Vicenza, Italy, about 135 miles east of Milan.

Celebrating Holy Communion

Like many Congregational churches since the days of the Pilgrims, our church long used both wine and a Common Cup for participants to drink from in the sacrament of Holy Communion. But, that was to change.

- ~ 1820's-1830's MA Congregational churches began to became deeply involved in the Temperance movement and refraining from alcohol use, though most still used wine in Communion. However, in 1876 and 1878, the state Association of Congregational churches voted to urge all its churches to stop using wine in that sacrament as well, in part to not tempt "reformed men" who come to their worship services. Thus, at a meeting on April 26, 1877, members of The Church of the Pilgrimage voted to use only "the pure juice of the grape" for Communion from that point on.
- ~ 1887 A major medical textbook was published which fully accepted the "germ theory of disease," causing many to be concerned about germs.
- ~ 1890's The Individual Cup Movement began which, for the sake of health, urged churches across American to give up the Common Cup and use individual cups instead for participants in Communion. Most Congregational churches eventually began using such individual cups in Communion. And often that began because someone made a gift of such cups to their church. And, so it was in our church.
- ~ Sunday, November 5, 1899 For the first time individual cups were used at a Communion service of our church. The Individual Communion Service used was a gift to our church from Miss S. C. Morrisey in memory of her father and mother.

36. *The Journey from Wine & Common Cup to Grape Juice & Individual Cups in Holy Communion*

A Significant Home Missionary Endeavor

As the 20th century approached, American Congregationalists began refocusing their home missionary efforts on supporting start-up Congregational churches for foreign language speaking newcomers to America, instead of for pioneers on America's advancing "frontier line," because, as the 1890 census Superintendent acknowledged, there was hardly any "frontier line" left in America by that time.

Participating in that trend, in 1899 The Church of the Pilgrimage and Congregationalism's Massachusetts Home Missionary Society began jointly sponsoring an **Italian Mission** in the Seaside section of Plymouth, near Cordage Park and next door to a German congregation.

In 1900, with assistance from our church, **Piero Petacci** from Italy was ordained in our church's Allerton Chapel to serve that mission.

In 1903 that mission was gathered as the **Italian Congregational Church of Plymouth**. It continued to be active until about 1940. That church began with its services in Italian, but a joint Sunday school there for Italian, German, and other children was conducted in English.

Rev. Petacci went on to become a noted Methodist Episcopal minister who helped establish an Italian church in Chicago: **First Italian Methodist Episcopal Church**. It's been said that at one point his church there had three schools with over 7,000 students.

37. *Helping to Establish a Congregational Ministry and Church For Italian-Speaking People in Plymouth*

Changes in the Church's Sanctuary

- ~ 1906 Electricity and chandeliers were installed and were first used for an evening worship service on Sunday, May 27.
- ~ 1910 Pews on either side of the pulpit and along the walls were eliminated. New pews without doors were installed as seen in our modern day. Also the Pilasters were "made over."
- ~ A Platform was built around the pulpit for the choir and an organ.
- ~ Stained glass was removed and replaced with cathedral glass.
- ~ The high mahogany Pulpit and painted drapery image behind it were removed.
- ~ An Organ was installed in the front of the church and the 1853 organ remained in the loft and both were played.



The Church of the Pilgrimage Sanctuary -- 1911

Photo gift from Belcher family

38. The Church's Changed Sanctuary As Seen in 1911

Charles H. Rutan, a noted architect with Boston firm "Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge" and summer attender of our church, provided the plan for our sanctuary's redesign in 1910.

Following Reformed Protestant tradition, Congregational churches long had Communion tables, not Altars, believing that Jesus Christ died only once for the world, not repeatedly in Communion services as an altar was sometimes thought to suggest. Also, most Congregational churches did not have crosses in their sanctuaries until the 1930's-50's, as following the Zwinglian tradition, such objects in a church had long been thought to be a distraction from true worship rather than contribute to it.

The Church of the Pilgrimage's Covenant Today

Our modern Covenant is a shortened version of the [Kansas City Statement of Faith](#), adopted by Congregationalists at their 1913 national meeting in Kansas City. Our church accepted that Statement in 1921 as "a working basis of its faith." That's significant because that 1913 Statement officially recognized that by then most American Congregational churches had moved away from the dogmatic Calvinistic theology of their earlier years, including the Calvinistic beliefs in predestination and that Jesus died only to save those who were divinely elected by God before their births to be saved.

Our Modern Church Covenant

We are united in striving to know the will of God, and to walk in His ways, made known or to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of The Church of Christ to proclaim the gospel to all mankind, laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and the realization of human brotherhood. And we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting. Amen.

39. The Present Covenant of The Church of the Pilgrimage

A transition in belief is evident at least by 1883, when the church voted to delete from its Articles of Faith the explicit statement that in Christ's judgment the wicked after their deaths will be "sent into everlasting punishment." More transition is evident in this pronouncement made in a 1926 worship bulletin of our church: "No creedal subscription is required for members in the Church of the Pilgrimage. The only requirement in brief is this: That one desires to think of God as Jesus did; to love God as Jesus did; and to serve God as Jesus did. He who so honestly desires is a Christian."

An Historic Event in Plymouth ~ 1918

The United States entered **World War I** in **April of 1917**. As that year ended there was the beginning of a severe shortage of coal for heating buildings which was felt early on in New England cities.

As a result of that coal shortage, the congregation of Plymouth's Methodist church began holding its worship services with our congregation in our church's building for a number of weeks beginning in January of 1918. Also, the town's Baptist and Universalist congregations began worshipping with the Unitarians.

On **March 28, 1918**, our congregation joined the congregations of the Plymouth Methodist, Baptist, Universalist, and Unitarian churches for a **Union Communion Service**. That sharing of worship was then considered an **historic event** for our community.

Sadly though, in addition to the **World War** then raging and the coal shortage, another great challenge for our nation and world was just beginning then. For March 1918 was also the time when the very first cases of the horrific "**Spanish Influenza**" (**H1N1** virus) **Pandemic** began to appear in the U.S., in a military base in the state of Kansas. That Flu is estimated to have infected about 1/3 of the world's population and caused more than 675,000 fatalities in the U.S.



41. The Church's 1954 Addition

On May 16, 1954, this addition was built to expand the church on two levels. It then cost \$26,477.59.



42. *The Church of the Pilgrimage and the United Church of Christ*

In 1948 our church voted to approve the eventual merger of the Congregational-Christian and Evangelical and Reformed denominations to form the United Church of Christ. The UCC was formed in 1957 at a national meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, which our church's minister then [Rev. Edwin T. Anthony] attended as a voting delegate. Once the UCC was officially formed, our church became a member of it. Though our church has evolved significantly since its 1801 gathering, it has always remained within the mainstream of American Congregationalism. For example, by January 1, 1962, 74.7% of the reported 5,402 Congregational-Christian churches in America, including our own church, had become members of the United Church of Christ.

Plimoth Plantation's Meeting-house/Fort - 1957

In 1957, the minister of our church, **Rev. Edwin T. Anthony**, was the Chairperson of a committee of Massachusetts Congregationalists which worked to plan and raise money for a replica of the Pilgrims' original Meeting-house/Fort to be built at Plimoth Plantation. As that committee wrote in November 1957:

"**Plimoth Plantation** is to be built again 337 years after the first building. The Pilgrim village of the 1620's is to be reconstructed on a 100-acre tract on Eel River, Plymouth. At the top of the hill will be the **square fog house** overawing the rest and used as a **fort**, a **storehouse**, and a **church** . . ."

"It is this building . . . that **Congregationalists** are going to establish as part of the project. Right by the door will be a bronze plaque containing the simple words:"

This replica of the original Fort-meetinghouse is given by American Congregationalists in memory of their spiritual ancestors who began the Congregational way, and founded in such a building the first Congregational Church in America.

43. **The Meeting-house/Fort Replica at Plimoth Plantation - 1957**



44. Significant Changes in 1968 and 2005

This additional building for church activities was designed so its exterior would resemble the Pilgrims' Meeting-House/Fort. The building was dedicated on September 22, 1968 as Pilgrim Church House. It was renovated and rededicated on December 11, 2005 as the Rev. John Robinson Center, in remembrance of the Pilgrims' Pastor.



45. *The Modern Sanctuary Chancel of The Church of the Pilgrimage*

Our modern Sanctuary Chancel continues to have a central Pulpit and Communion Table, both of which were long the tradition within Congregational churches.

The Cross on our sanctuary front wall in front of the Dossal Curtain was added about 1950 -- a change which most Congregational heritage churches in America made in the 1930's-1950's time period.

Our Church Choir, Organ Console, and Organ Pipes are located in our Chancel. On the main floor of the sanctuary in front of the Chancel there is a large Piano on the left and a **Baptismal Font** on the right.



The Church of the Pilgrimage
Photo by Doug Post

Honoring Our Pilgrim Heritage

As we move through 2020 and beyond into the future,

The Church of the Pilgrimage

continues its quest in finding

“more Truth and Light”

from God’s word, constantly seeking,
in the words of Pastor John Robinson and
the language of our Church’s Covenant --

God’s ways “made known and

to be made known to us.”

SOURCES

1. **Mayflower II** ~ Showalter image
2. **The Pilgrims' Meeting-House/Fort** ~ Showalter image
3. **Cannons in the Meeting-House/Fort** ~ Showalter image
4. **The Pulpit in the Meeting-House/Fort** ~ I thank eminent Pilgrim scholar Dr. Jeremy Bangs for his information on this pulpit and railing. In 1988 he designed, based on his research, the ones shown here at Plimoth Plantation. He has described that research in his book, [Images of Leiden and of Pilgrim Topics](#). Sadly, by 2019 that pulpit and railing had been removed from this Meeting-House/Fort. ~ Dr. Bangs currently is Director of the Leiden American Pilgrim Museum Foundation of Leiden, Netherlands. See that museum's Facebook page at [Leiden American Pilgrim Museum](#). Previously, Dr. Bangs was Chief Curator of Plimoth Plantation (1986-1991) and visiting curator of manuscripts at Pilgrim Hall Museum in Plymouth, MA (1994-1996). He has published several books and many articles about the Pilgrims. ~ Showalter image
5. **1744-1831 Meeting-House of the First Church** ~ Lord, Arthur. "The Pilgrims' Church in Plymouth," *The New England Magazine*, new ser. v. 7, 1892-1893, p. 780 at [The Third Church, erected 1744 - \[HathiTrust\]](#).
6. **Rev. Chandler Robbins** ~ The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives image
7. **Rev. James Kendall** ~ Lord, Arthur. "Portrait of James Kendall," *Plymouth Church Records - 1620-1859. Part II*, p. 538, Publication of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Boston, Volume XXIII, 1923 at [Plymouth Church Records, Part II - \[Google Books\]](#).

8. Third Church's First House of Worship ~ The Church of the Pilgrimage

Archives image - Photo about 1890's.

- The land for this building was purchased from Thomas Jackson Jr. The deed showing its purchase is at the Plymouth County Registry of Deeds and is accessible online at [Plymouth County Registry of Deeds - \[Go to TitleView, Deed Book 00088, web pages 291-293\]](#).
- This house of worship for Third Church was built in 1801, as indicated in the following sources.
- Hurd, D. Hamilton. "History of Plymouth County, Massachusetts, with Biographical Sketches." p. 180, J. W. Lewis & Co., Chicago, 1884 at [History of Plymouth County, Massachusetts - \[HathiTrust\]](#).
- Thacher, James. "History of the Town of Plymouth, from Its First Settlement in 1620 to the Present Time." Second Edition, pp. 290-291, Marsh, Capen & Lyon, Boston, 1835 at [History of the Town of Plymouth - \[Google Books\]](#).

9. The 52 People Who Gathered the Third Church of Christ in Plymouth in 1801

~ "Third Church of Christ in Plymouth, Ledger 1, 1801-1823," p. 4 - Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

~ 53 members of First Church were dismissed from the First Church in order to follow through with their intention of gathering the Third Church in 1801. Of those 53, only 52 actually joined Third Church when it was gathered. The one missing person from that group was Mercy Robbins who, as it turned out, never did become a member of Third Church.

10. The Church Covenant Entered Into On October 1, 1801 ~ "Third Church of Christ in Plymouth, Ledger 1, 1801-1823," p. 10

- Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

11. The Job Description for Third Church's Ministers ~ "Third Church of Christ in Plymouth, Ledger 1, 1801-1823," p. 8

- Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

12. Rev. Adoniram Judson Sr. ~ Grose, Howard (Ed.). "Judsoniana: Gleaned from various sources by the editor." Missions: A Baptist Monthly Magazine, Volume 5, Number 6, June 1914, p. 500 at [Adoniram Judson, Senior - \[HathiTrust\]](#).

13. Deacon John Bishop's House ~ Showalter image

14. Eight Churches Which Emerged ~ Lord, Arthur. "Offshoots From the First Church, Plymouth." *Plymouth Church Records - 1620-1859. Part 1*, p. liv, Publication of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Boston, Volume XXII, 1920 at [Plymouth Church Records, Part 1 - \[Google Books\]](#).

15. Rev. Adoniram Judson Jr. ~ Magee, John L., lithographer; Lewis Colby & Co., publisher at [Adoniram Judson, DD - \[Wikimedia Commons\]](#), cropped, reduced size, CC0 1.0.

16. The Burial Hill Gravestone of John Bishop and Abigail ~ Showalter image
~ John's birthplace noted in Davis, William T., "Ancient Landmarks of Plymouth." Part 1, A. Williams and Company, Boston, 1883, p. 102 at [Ancient Landmarks of Plymouth - \[Google Books\]](#).

17. The End of Massachusetts Town Taxes Supporting Religion

~ In 1821, a state wide referendum was held in which Commonwealth voters were asked to ratify a MA Constitutional Convention's proposal to abolish support, by MA towns, of Protestant ministers and required attendance upon the instructions of the clergy. That proposal was defeated by a vote of 19,547 to 11,065.

~ A similar proposal [though not specifying "Protestant" ministers] was presented again to MA voters in a November 11, 1833 referendum. That proposal was ratified by an overwhelming vote of 32,354 for it and 3,272 against it. Thus, the Massachusetts Bill of Rights was amended accordingly and state support of religion came to an end in Massachusetts.

~ Hartwell, Edward M. "Appendix, I. Changes Effectuated by Amendments of the Constitution," *Referenda in Massachusetts and Boston*, City of Boston Statistics Department, City of Boston Printing Department, 1910, p.9 at: [Referenda in Massachusetts and Boston - \[Google Books\]](#).

~ Referendum in Massachusetts, "Transactions of the Commonwealth Club of California", Volume VI, May 1911 to January 1912, San Francisco, California, 1912, p. 333 at [Transactions of the Commonwealth Club of California - \[Google Books\]](#).

~ Buck, Edward, "Massachusetts Ecclesiastical Law", Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1866, pp. 64-65 at [Massachusetts Ecclesiastical Law - \[Google Books\]](#).

18. Washington Allston ~ At: [Washington Allston - \[Wikipedia\]](#) creator QS: P170, Q468272, [Washington Allston - \[Wikimedia Commons\]](#), cropped, reduced size, [CC0 1.0](#).

19. The 1840 Church of the Pilgrimage ~ "1870 Manual of The Church of the Pilgrimage" - The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives booklet.

20. The Construction and Financing of the 1840 Church of the Pilgrimage ~ The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives image

21. The 1840 Pew Plan ~ Showalter image created from information in "The Plan of the Pews in the Church of the Pilgrimage" document placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

22. The Third Church's 1840 Sanctuary Described ~ [left image] Stuart, James et alia. "Chap: III. Pl: VII." *The Antiquities of Athens*. Vol. 1, J. B. Haberkorn, London, 1762, cropped, reduced size, at [The Antiquities of Athens - \[Archive.org\]](#).

~ [right image] Showalter image

~ "Old Colony Memorial," Saturday, November 28, 1840, 967, p. 2.

23. 1840 Church of the Pilgrimage Dedication ~ The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives image

24. 1841 Tower Bell ~ The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives image

25. The Third Church's Sanctuary 1856-1887 ~ The Church of the Pilgrimage Archive image

26. Congregationalism's Famous Burial Hill Declaration ~ John Adams Whipple photo at [National Congregational Council at Plymouth Rock, June 22, 1865 at the Metropolitan Museum, New York - \[Metropolitan Museum of Art\]](#), (CCO 1.0).

27. Third Church's Invitation to Congregationalists ~ The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives image

~ "The Church of the Pilgrimage, Book of Church Records - Vol. 3rd, 1851-1883," January 30, 1870 meeting - Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

28. Third Church Becomes "The Church of the Pilgrimage" ~ "The Church of the Pilgrimage, Book of Church Records - Vol. 3rd, 1851-1883," January 30 and May 5 church meetings in 1870 - Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

29. 1871 Female Members Are Finally Granted the Right to Vote ~ "The Church of the Pilgrimage, Book of Church Records - Vol. 3rd, 1851-1883," February 13, 1871 meeting - Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

30. A View from the Top of Burial Hill ~ Kingman, Bradford. - "Burial Hill, Plymouth, Massachusetts, from 1657 to 1892: With Biographical and Historical Notes." New England Illustrated Historical Publishing Company, 1892, at [Burial Hill in Plymouth MA - \[Wikipedia\]](#), cropped, reduced size, CC0 1.0.

31. The 1840 Church Rededicated in 1888 ~ Showalter image, also "Notes taken by Mrs. A.B. Handy - 1940, p. 2" and "History of The Church of the Pilgrimage" by Rev. Gary L. Marks, p. 11, in The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives

32. The Incorporation of The Church of the Pilgrimage ~ The Church of the Pilgrimage was incorporated on January 20, 1890 under then Chapter 404 of the Massachusetts Acts of 1887 and noted at that time to be new Corporation No. 3958 - document copy in The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives.

~ 103 churches in Massachusetts were incorporated under that 1887 statute in the period from 1887-1890. Of that number, 46 [including our church] were Congregational. In 1890 there were said to be 565 Congregational churches in Massachusetts.

~ "Church Incorporation Under the Laws of Massachusetts, 1891," Press of Springfield Printing and Binding Co., Springfield, Massachusetts, 1891

~ "The Congregational Year-Book, 1891," National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United State, Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society, Boston, 1891, p. 214 at [The Congregational Year-Book, 1891 - \[Archive.org\]](#).

~ The Bylaws of The Church of the Pilgrimage in 1901, 1939, and 1947 in The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives.

33. The Church's Tower Severely Damaged by Storms ~ "Damaged by the Gale," Boston Journal, Tuesday, January 13, 1885, Vol. LII, Issue: 17010, p. 2.

~ "The Great Storm!, The Worst Ever Known in Plymouth, Wreck Strewn Shore, Great Loss of Life on the Coast," The Old Colony Memorial, December 3, 1898, p. 4.

~ "At Last," The Old Colony Memorial, August 5, 1899, p. 4.

~ "The Church of the Pilgrimage, Book of Church Records - 1889-1930," February 15, 1917, p. 288 - Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

~ The church's September 20, 1953 worship bulletin in The Church of the Pilgrimage's Archives.

34. The Church of the Pilgrimage Redesigned in 1899 ~ Photograph by Alfred Stevens Burbank, abt 1906 - The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives image
~ On June 26, 1899, the church voted to accept the more elaborate of the two plans presented to it for the repair of its storm damaged tower. In that period, the Bylaws of the church apparently also recognized a group connected to The Church of the Pilgrimage which it referred to as the "Congregation." The church's Bylaws in 1901 [and presumably earlier] defined the "Congregation" as being made up of "such persons of lawful age as habitually worship with the Church and contribute in its recognized methods for the support of its services." According to church records, at the time the church voted on those tower repair plans, the Congregation in a separate meeting also voted on them, with the result that the Congregation concurred with the church members' vote.

35. Inspiration for the Redesign ~ At: [Tango7174](#) , [Veneto Vicenza2 Madonna Monte Berico tango7174](#) - [Wikimedia Commons], reduced size, CC BY-SA 4.0.

36. The Journey from Wine and Common Cup ~ "Minutes," The General Association of the Congregational Churches of Massachusetts, 1876, Minutes of the Seventy-fourth Annual Meeting, Lowell, June 20-22, Congregational Publishing Society, Boston, 1876, p. 12 at [1876 Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the General Association of the Congregational Churches of Massachusetts - \[Archive.org\]](#).
~ "The Church of the Pilgrimage, Book of Church Records - Vol. 3rd, 1851-1883," April 26, 1877 church meeting
~ "The Church of the Pilgrimage, Book of Church Records - 1889-1930," November 5, 1899, p. 101 and January 22, 1900, p. 103-104. - Both these church ledgers placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

37. Helping to Establish a Congregational Ministry and Church ~ "The Church of the Pilgrimage, Book of Church Records - 1889-1930," various church meetings November 2, 1899, p. 100 and later. - Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

38. The Church's Changed Sanctuary ~ The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives [Belcher family] image and document: "History of the Church of the Pilgrimage" by Henry Stegmaier, 1940.
~ "The Church of the Pilgrimage, Book of Church Records - 1889-1930," November 19, 1909 meeting, pp. 211-212 [Vote was taken to proceed with the sanctuary redesign/renovation.] and January 12, 1911 meeting, p. 228 [It was noted that "all the Pilasters had to be made over" in the renovation.] - Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

39. The Present Covenant ~ "The Church of the Pilgrimage, Book of Church Records - Vol. 3rd, 1851-1883," June 24, 1883 meeting - Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.
~ The church's February 21, 1926 worship bulletin (Minister: Rev. Theodore Busfield) in The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives.

40. An Historic Event in Plymouth - 1918

~ "The Church of the Pilgrimage, Book of Church Records - 1889-1930," Early 1918 entries, pp. 299, 301 - Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.
~ Nolan, Seth. "100 years ago, coal shortage, bitter cold sent Northeast US into 'dire' situation," *Williamsport Sun-Gazette*, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, August 18, 2020 at [100 years ago, coal shortage, bitter cold sent Northeast US into 'dire' situation.](#)
~ 1918 Pandemic Influenza Historic Timeline, "Centers for Disease Control and Prevention," at [1918 Pandemic Influenza Historic Timeline](#).
~ August 27, 1918, Flu Epidemic Begins in Boston, "Massmoments.org," at [Flu Epidemic Begins in Boston](#).

41. The Church's 1954 Addition ~ Showalter image

~ The church's September 20, 1953 and May 16, 1954 worship bulletins in The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives.

42. The Church of the Pilgrimage and the United Church of Christ ~ Showalter image

~ The church's June 23, 1957 worship bulletin in The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives.

43. The Meeting-house/Fort Replica at Plimoth Plantation - 1957 ~ "The Pilgrims' Fort-Meetinghouse News," November 1957 - The Church of the Pilgrimage Archives.

44. Significant Changes in 1968 and 2005 ~ Showalter image

45. The Modern Sanctuary Chancel ~ Showalter image

~ "The Church of the Pilgrimage, Church Records - 1931-1948," January 22, 1950 meeting - Ledger placed on deposit in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth by The Church of the Pilgrimage.

46. The Church of the Pilgrimage and Its Continuing Quest - Doug Post image

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